

On the Ground

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*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

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**Promoting exchange, interaction
and understanding among diverse
communities**

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UNDP Sri Lanka's new Country Programme 2013-2017 comes into operation

UNDP Sri Lanka is repositioning itself for a new era. The new five year Country Programme, coming into place this year, focuses on two broad areas:

- Governance for Empowerment and Social Inclusion: which includes work on socio-economic recovery and development, social inclusion, rule of law and access to justice, local governance, human rights and parliamentary support, and
- Environmental Sustainability and Disaster Resilience: which includes work on ecosystem-based natural resource management, clean energy, climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction.

In line with the transition from humanitarian response to recovery and sustainable development, UNDP is gradually adopting a wider lens, shifting from what has been a relatively intensive focus on the North and the East, to look at issues of regional disparity and socio-economic inequalities. Increased emphasis will also be placed on institutionalizing good downstream practices, promoting multi-stakeholder approaches to advocacy and reform and harnessing Sri Lanka's knowledge for South-South exchange and global learning.

HDR 2013 Focuses on the Rise of the South



From left: Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy, H. E. John Rankin, Hon (Prof) G. L. Peiris, Mr Subinay Nandy, Dr. B. M. S. Batagoda and Ms. Priyanthi Fernando

UNDP's Human Development Report 2013 (HDR 2013) was launched in Sri Lanka as a collaborative effort of UNDP Sri Lanka and the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIIRSS) and was presided over by Hon. (Prof) G. L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs.

Titled, "The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World", the HDR 2013 examines the profound shift in global dynamics driven by the fast-rising new powers of the developing world and its long-term implications for human development. According to the Human Development Index (HDI) monitored annually by the HDR, Sri Lanka makes it to the high human development category with a HDI ranking of 0.715 against the global average of 0.694.

Expressing his thoughts during the launch, Hon. (Prof) G. L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, stated, "GDP growth needs to be accompanied by social equity; i.e., the tangible improvement of lives of people. Development cannot be an abstraction of figures for most of society." He also emphasized the need for measured state interventions to ensure that all people derive the benefits of GDP growth, and the need for effective welfare mechanisms, enhancing connectivity, both at the national and regional level, and promoting trade between countries of the South.

Mr. Subinay Nandy, the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Sri Lanka noted, "The 2013 HDR highlights the experiences of a new group of Southern countries that are experiencing rapid developmental progress as we speak, countries which collectively makeup a significant portion of the world population, and offers insights into the policy and programmatic drivers that have enabled these countries to achieve this progress at such unprecedented scale and speed. Sri Lanka itself is on an ambitious development path. Against this background, the experiences, insights and models from other countries are useful for comparison and where appropriate, cross-fertilization and replication."

Eminent speakers, H. E. John Rankin, British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Dr. B. M. S. Batagoda, Director General of the Department of National Planning, Dr. Indrajith Coomaraswamy, Former Director – Economic Affairs, Commonwealth Secretariat and Ms. Priyanthi Fernando, Executive Director, Centre for Poverty Analysis, reviewed vital aspects of the Report, including drivers for new human development paths, factors vital to sustain human development and lessons for Sri Lanka and importance of governance and new international partnerships that are essential in meeting global public goods.

Expressing his thoughts on the launch event, Mr. Asanga Abeygoonesekera, Executive Director of LKIIRSS noted, "As the premier National Think Tank in Sri Lanka, the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute is pleased to launch the Human Development Report 2013 in collaboration with UNDP. The compass pointing towards the South is a fact that everyone should accept, as never in human history have so many lives improved. With the changing world order and global shift towards the South, the report will be valuable to policy and development specialists and think tanks such as ours, to formulate and assess the development plans and the impact they have on individuals."

Human Development
Report 2013
The Rise of the South
Human Progress in a Diverse World



[Read more:](#)
[Complete HDR 2013 | Summary of the Report](#)

UNDP supports the establishment of the first regional office of the Department of Registration of Persons

The office of the Department of Registration of Persons declared open its first regional office on April 22, 2013 at the Vavuniya Kachcheri Complex, built with support from UNDP's Equal Access to Justice Project and funded by UNHCR.

The newly established office is expected to expedite the issuing of National Identity Cards to those in Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Anuradhapura and Trincomalee districts, thereby providing greater convenience and enhancing access to justice.

The office was declared open by Mrs. Malkanthi Wickramasinghe, Secretary, Ministry of National Languages and Social Integration and Mr. S Hettiarachchi, Additional Secretary Ministry of Defense in the presence of Mr. R. M. Sarath Kumara, Commissioner General of the Department for Registration of Persons.

A second regional office, currently under construction in Batticaloa, will be declared open next month which is also supported by UNDP's Equal Access to Justice Project and funded by the UN Human Security Trust Fund.



Mrs. Wickramasinghe and other officials during the opening

Global recognition for GEF/SGP initiative on introducing electric vehicles to Sri Lanka

A project implemented by UNDP Sri Lanka's Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme (GEF/SGP) on introducing electric vehicles to the country received global recognition recently when it was selected as a winner of the Lighthouse Projects Competition. The project was also showcased at the Climate Change Conference.

With funding support from GEF/SGP, the concept of the project was developed by Mr. Dhatusena W. Senanayake, President of the Lanka Electric Vehicle Association (LEVA). His own experiences of children being affected by respiratory diseases such as asthma due to air pollution was a main factor that led him to look at the possibility of developing an environmentally-friendly transport system.

The main goal of the project was to demonstrate the viability of and pave the way for the commercial introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles on the streets in Colombo. As such, the project introduced electric three-wheelers. In addition, unemployed youth were trained in operating and maintaining these vehicles, while an awareness campaign was also conducted on the benefits of electric vehicles for reducing emissions and pollution, with support from the Ministry of Urban Development.

Electric vehicles were largely unknown and untested in Sri Lanka before this project. Yet, this initiative paved the way for more firms to import and assemble electric vehicles. This has also benefitted the tourism sector, with several companies taking steps to manufacture electric three-wheelers, primarily for use in ecotourism.

[Read more](#)



Mr. Dhatusena Senanayake (4th from left), accepting the award

Award Ceremony of the Course for Community Catalysts



The participants pose with officials from the University of Jaffna, UNDP, and the government

The 2nd phase of the Course for Community Catalysts in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts, a flagship programme promoting youth leadership development carried out through the Local Governance Programme, drew to a conclusion with the awarding of certificates to the 124 participants.

[Read more](#)

Celebrating World Water Day 2013

On March 22, UNDP's Every Drop Matters Sri Lanka Project marked World Water Day, themed, "Water Co-operation", with a series of events in Biyagama, aimed at raising awareness on water quantity and quality issues and minimizing water pollution. The event brought together government officials, local authorities, the private sector, volunteers and the members of the local community in Biyagama and was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, Biyagama Local Authority, UN Volunteers, Youth for Greener Sri Lanka, Paapedi and Expolanka Holdings Plc.

The day's events included a workshop for the corporate sector on improving understanding of water quantity and quality issues, laying the foundation for a bio gas facility to process solid waste, wastewater and toilet waste that otherwise harm the quality of water, an awareness and advocacy campaign to spread awareness on waste, water and health and the collection of harmful waste accumulated at houses, such as, CFL bulbs, plastic, e-waste and unused med-



Volunteers at the event

icine, which can lead to water pollution. Participants of 'Paapedi' – a group of cyclists travelling from Anuradhapura to Colombo, raising awareness on zero-emission transport, also joined the day's proceedings as they made a stop in Biyagama.

[Read more](#) | [Photographs](#)

Beyond the MDGs: Post 2015 discussions

What are your priorities for the future?

With the target year for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - 2015 - fast approaching us, discussions are now underway on the post 2015 development agenda. A global report, titled, "Realizing the Future We Want for All" is to be submitted to the UN Secretary-General in June 2013.

While discussions are underway at the national and global level, the United Nations wants to hear from you on your priorities and views of the future, so that global leaders can be informed as they begin the process of defining the new development agenda for the world.



Share your priorities for a better future here and make your voice heard:
<http://www.myworld2015.org/>



Students train with well-known dancer Prashadi Ranasinghe



Exploring career options



Students perform during the cultural night



Students on board the Peace Train, from Badulla to Kandy

What they say...

"I am very happy I came for the programme for a couple of reasons. I come from this village where most of the people are Tamil. But here, I get to meet and interact with youngsters from other communities. Also, back home, we get to play only a few sports, but here, we got a chance to play so many different sports and meet so many prominent individuals. I liked being at this university. I want to study hard and come to a university like this"

A student from Vavuniya District

"Through this, children get to learn new things. We – as people who are volunteering for this programme – get to interact with the children who are participating, get to make sure that they get the message of the whole programme so that they will be changed individuals when they become the future leaders."

Ishan Jalill, a V-force volunteer

I encourage you to use this as an opportunity and make a beginning in playing the role of a peace-builder – even a small start can go a long way – so do not hesitate to take that first step in spreading the message of peace and harmony through sports, through culture, and through friendship.

Razina Bilgrami,
Country Director, a.i., UNDP Sri Lanka

"I have participated in two such programmes before this. I have gained a lot of knowledge through these. I like to share this knowledge with my friends at school. We were able to learn about leadership and speak to people from different professions and get to know about their experiences. I have made new friends with Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil students. I believe that in addition to what we learn at school, by participating in such programmes, we can learn valuable life skills which will help us to become better citizens"

Shanika, a student from
Polonnaruwa District

"Our students have participated in this programme over the past 2-3 years. We can see a change in the students. They've made new friends and have developed new skills. For example, they have become better leaders; we see them now taking initiatives and the lead in school activities. These are indeed very encouraging."

Ms. Navalakshmi Chandrakumar,
Principal,
Aanaikoddai Roman Catholic Tamil Mixed School,
Jaffna District

Improving interaction, understanding and co-existence among diverse communities:

Finale of the Twinning Schools Programme

Over 200 students representing 21 schools from the districts of Jaffna, Vavuniya, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Ampara participated at the finale of the Twinning Schools Programme (TSP), an initiative, which aims to improve interaction, understanding and co-existence between young people from diverse communities and regions in Sri Lanka.

Held from April 17 to 21, 2013 at the Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, the finale provided a platform for students to learn and develop a variety of new skills in sports, aesthetics and communications, with workshops and trainings being conducted by leading personalities from the fields of sports, dance, music and art. The TSP is implemented under UNDP's Transition Recovery Programme, with support from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

The finale of the TSP was supported by UN Volunteers, with the participation of the volunteer force, and co-hosted by the Rotary Club of Badulla and the Uva Wellassa University.

The Finale also hosted a learning event for partners to exchange experiences with the objective of informing and improving similar initiatives in the future. The event culminated with the students boarding the Peace Train from Badulla to Kandy.

The finale was attended by Ms. Razina Bilgrami, Country Director, a.i., UNDP Sri Lanka and Steven Wawrzonek, First Secretary - Development Cooperation Australian High Commission. Mr. Wawrzonek commended the importance of such initiatives towards achieving lasting peace.

More:

About the Twinning Schools Programme finale

http://www.lk.undp.org/content/dam/srilanka/docs/peaceandrecovery/Trinning%20Schools_Brochure_Final%2004112013.pdf

Photographs...

http://www.facebook.com/UNDPSriLanka/photos_stream

As it happened...

<https://twitter.com/UNDPSriLanka>

What they say...

<http://www.youtube.com/UNDPSriLanka>



Discussing UNDP's achievements and future work in Northern districts

Mr. Enrico Gaveglia, Deputy Country Director, UNDP and Ms. Verena Linneweber, the visiting Programme Specialist of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific engaged in a field mission from May 5 to 6, 2013, in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts, where they met and exchanged views with Government officials and women and youth leaders, discussed UNDP's support and future priorities in these areas.

Engaging in discussions with members of the Kilinochchi District Women's Development Federation, which was established with support from UNDP, Mr. Gaveglia and Ms. Linneweber recognized their efforts and discussed support for future programmes. The role of the Federation and its members in raising awareness and advocating for change in addressing some of key challenges facing the communities, including the protection of women and children, illegal alcohol production and usage, land issues and expanding income, as well as their future plans were among those highlighted during the meeting.

Discussions were then held with youth leaders of Community-Based Organizations of Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts, trained by the University of Jaffna, under UNDP's Community Catalysts' Programme. Mr. Gaveglia and Ms. Linneweber commended the youth leaders on their achievements and recognized the changes that the programme has helped bring about, such as, enhancing opportunities for employment in the humanitarian and development fields, strengthening trust between the youth and communities and strengthening networks among youth groups and local government institutions. They also encouraged the youth leaders to use the knowledge and skills gained in moving forward.

"As the country moves forward in the development trajectory, the role of youth – as future leaders – will



During discussions with Ms. R. Ketheeswaran, the Government Agent of Kilinochchi

be crucial," Mr. Gaveglia explained, adding that enhancing the productive skills of youth, especially developing their entrepreneurship skills, will be a focus of UNDP's work.

Elaborating on the impact of these initiatives, Ms. R. Ketheeswaran, Government Agent of Kilinochchi noted that members of the Women's Federation are very committed and empowered, while the youth leadership training has also been tremendously useful. However, she highlighted the need to continue such initiatives in order to address some of the urgent challenges and further improve the lives of the people in the region. "Unemployment among youth remains a key challenge – there is a need for production sites and factories. Although support has also been provided to women headed households to increase their income, more remains to be done. The lack of technical knowledge among staff in the district and divisional offices is also a concern which needs to be addressed," she stated.

A key highlight of the visit was the ceremonial opening and handing over of the Fish Collection Centre in Kallapadu in the Mullaitivu District, built with support from UNDP, and financial assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency. The Centre was handed-over to the Fisheries' Cooperative Societies Union (FCSU).

"UNDP aims to empower people, by providing them with tools such as access to knowledge and other resources, to seize opportunities and lead the lives that they want", noted the visiting Programme Specialist Ms. Linneweber. "Here, UNDP provided some tools, but it was really your community that took initiative and used them for improving your own lives. UNDP is proud of being your partner."



During the meeting with youth leaders

UNDP Country Office Retreat - 2013

With 2013 marking the start of UNDP's new five-year programme cycle, the UNDP Country Office Retreat, held from May 7 - 9, 2013 in Negombo, saw staff members delve into the organization's priorities for the coming years, while also addressing the challenges of the past years and engaging in fun-filled team building activities.

A key focus of the Retreat was facilitating better understanding of the four key thematic areas of UNDP's new Country Programme Action Plan: Governance for Local Economic Development; Rule of Law, Access to Justice, Human Rights and Social Integration; Sustainable use of Natural Resources, Biodiversity Management and Climate Change Adaptation; and Disaster Risk Management.

An activity titled, 'Sakoni', or 'the Marketplace' saw participants analyze and present creatively the substantive aspects, expected results and outcomes under each thematic area, the role of each unit in contributing towards achieving these outcomes and the key deliverables for 2013-2014, through short-skits, a snake-and-ladders game and interactive discussions.

The respective units were also tasked with identifying their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and defining their priorities under the new Country Programme, with the objective of the exercise being to pave the way for greater clarity in these areas in future work planning.

In reflecting on the lessons learnt in the past year, participants discussed and shared ideas on selected areas of the Global Staff Survey of 2012. Recommendations were made on key areas for action in the coming year in addressing these challenges and concerns.

A variety of games and activities the participants actively participated in, enhanced positive group dynamics, encouraged participants to identify common ground with other staff members, and strengthened team spirit.



All UNDP Staff lighting the traditional oil lamp



The Retreat Action Committee with Mr. Subinay Nandy, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative

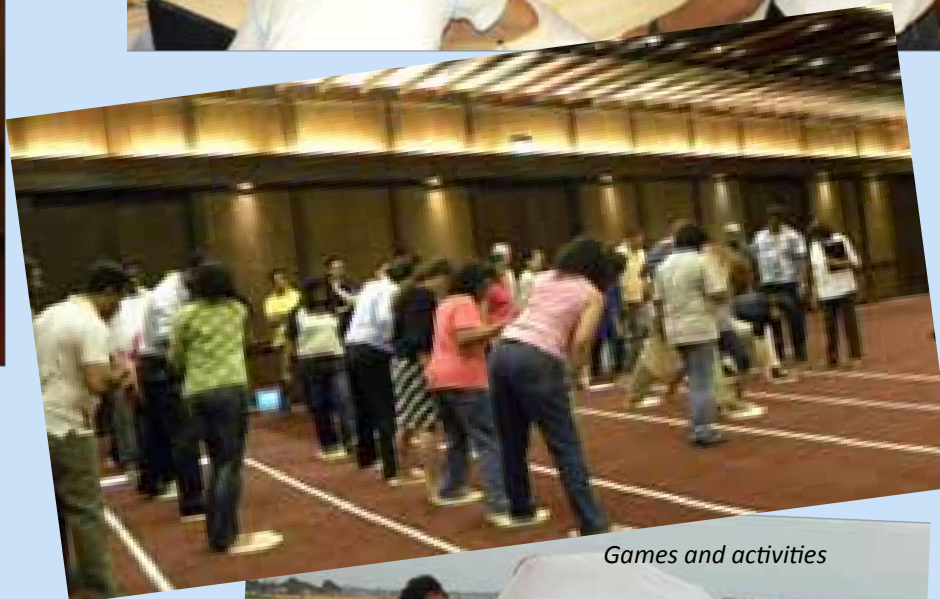
All UNDP Country Office staff during the retreat



UNDP Country Office Retreat in pictures...



Participants, analyze and present creatively, the expected results and outcomes under each thematic area, the role of each unit in contributing towards achieving these outcomes and the key deliverables for 2013-2014



Games and activities



*Reflecting on and
discussing the lessons
learnt in the past year*

